

Think twice before clicking *Reply to All*.

- Only use *Reply to All* if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message.

Don't reply to or forward spam.

- By replying to spam or even by following the directions for unsubscribing from the spammer's email list, you are confirming that your email address is 'live'. Confirming this will only generate even more spam. Therefore, just click "Report spam" to report the message to Gmail, to help prevent future email from this user.
- Don't forward virus hoaxes and chain letters.

Be wary of strange emails

- If you are prompted to reset passwords, enter account numbers, update information or any other unusual request, DO NOT DO IT. Report these emails as "Phishing" and delete them. If you are unsure, contact the Technology Office.

Be concise and to the point.

- Do not make an e-mail longer than it needs to be. Remember that reading an e-mail is harder than reading printed communications, and a long e-mail can be very discouraging to read.

Do not write in CAPITALS.

- IF YOU WRITE IN CAPITALS IT SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING. This can be highly annoying and might trigger an unwanted emotional response. Therefore, try not to send any email text in capitals. If you want to emphasize the importance of something, **bold** or *italicize* it.

Avoid using URGENT and IMPORTANT.

- Avoid these types of words in an email or subject line. Only use this if it is a really, really urgent or important message, or you can end up as 'the girl who cried "Wolf!"'.

Take care with abbreviations and emoticons.

- Try not to use abbreviations such as BTW and LOL. The recipient might not be aware of the meanings of the abbreviations and in emails to adults these are generally not appropriate. The same goes for emoticons, such as the smiley :-). If you are not sure whether your recipient knows what it means, it is better not to use it.

Use proper spelling, grammar & punctuation.

- Improper spelling, grammar and punctuation give a bad impression. E-mails with no punctuation or commas are also difficult to read, and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text. Gmail has an easy-to-use spell checking option.

Answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions.

- If you do not answer the questions posed in the original email, you will receive further e-mails regarding the unanswered questions, which will not only waste everyone's time, but lead to frustration.

Answer in a timely manner.

- The accepted turn around time for replying to an email is *24 hours*. It is important to check your email on a regular basis.

Do not attach unnecessary files.

- If the attachment is simply text without pictures, why not cut and paste the text into the email itself?
- By sending large attachments you can annoy people and clog their e-mail system. Use Google Docs instead, and invite them to share the document with you.

Use proper structure & layout.

- Reading from a screen is more difficult than reading from paper. The structure and layout is very important for e-mail messages. Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph. When making points, number them or mark each point as separate.

Avoid fancy formatting.

- Remember that the recipient of your emails might not be able to view complicated text formatting, or might see different fonts than you had intended. When using colors, use a color that is easy to read on the background. Better yet, stick to black on white.

Do not use email to discuss confidential information.

- Sending an email is like sending a postcard. If you don't want your email to be displayed on a bulletin board, don't send it. Moreover, never make any libelous, sexist or racially discriminating comments in emails, even if they are meant to be a joke.

Use a meaningful subject.

- Try to use a subject that is meaningful to the recipient as well as to yourself. For instance, when you send an email about an event, it is better to mention the actual name of the event, e.g. "Back to School Night" than to just say 'information

about Tuesday' in the subject.

Avoid long sentences.

- Keep your sentences short. Email is meant to be a quick medium and requires a different kind of writing than traditional post. Also take care not to send emails that are too long. If a person receives an email that looks like an essay, chances are that they will not even *try* to read it!